



75: Four in the Morning by cali-chan

Category: Stranger Things, 2016

Genre: Family, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Eleven/Jane H., Jonathan B., Mike W., Nancy W.

Pairings: Jonathan B./Nancy W., Mike W./Eleven/Jane H.

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-29 10:47:05

Updated: 2017-11-29 10:47:05

Packaged: 2019-12-17 05:06:43

Rating: T

Chapters: 1

Words: 6,269

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: "You want me to get some sleep and go to school today? Then take me to the cabin. Please," he was all but begging. Fluff/fam, Mike/Eleven Jonathan/Nancy, immediately post S2 climax. (Spoilers!)

75: Four in the Morning

Four in the Morning. PG-13, fluff/fam, Mike/Eleven + Jonathan/Nancy, immediately post S2 climax.

"You want me to get some sleep and go to school today? Then take me to the cabin. Please," he was all but begging.

Note: I don't necessarily believe this is how this went in canon, but everybody and their mother has already written about the aftermath way better than I ever could, and I wanted to write Jonathan, so... here.

.

It was nearing four in the morning when Jonathan walked into the kitchen to get a glass of water and found the Wheeler siblings arguing at the dinner table.

After they finally managed to get that Mind Flayer thing out of Will, they drove back to his house, where they found Steve and the kids waiting eagerly for any news. They brought Will to their mother's room, where they tended to the burn on his side as best as they could under the circumstances, and he fell asleep quickly after, tired and sore from everything he'd been through. Jonathan and Joyce had stayed with him as much as possible in the hours that followed.

The rest of the group gravitated toward the back of the house as well; mainly the boys, initially, to check on Will, but the rest headed that way because one of their front windows was still broken— nobody had the energy or the wherewithal to bother covering it— and the chill creeping in from outside was making the living room unlivable. Steve had conked out in Will's bed— not unconscious, thankfully; just asleep— with his legs hanging off the end because it was too small for him. The rest of the kids had sort of piled up in an unorganized heap at the foot of the bed, exhausted once the adrenaline finally wore off.

Nancy had been tasked with waking Steve up every hour or so, to make sure that he was getting through the worst of his concussion all right. In between those moments, she managed to catch intermittent naps on Jonathan's bed. He would've joined her, but he wanted to make sure he was around for Will and his mom. He still felt really guilty that he wasn't there when everything started to go down. He knew he couldn't have seen it coming, but still.

The only one who had insisted on staying around the living area after checking on Will was Mike, and no matter how much anyone else insisted he'd be better off in Will's bedroom, the kid wouldn't budge, perching himself on their couch by the broken window so he could keep watch on their driveway. Of course, other than Max's stepbrother apparently waking up inside his car after being pharmaceutically knocked unconscious and noisily driving off without bothering to show his face again (Jonathan didn't know the details and hadn't bothered to ask), their driveway had been quiet for hours.

It had been a long, *long* night.

Now that his mother had finally been able to fall into some sort of restful sleep rather than waking up abruptly every five minutes to fitfully reach for Will in desperation, Jonathan felt it was okay to step out for a bit and maybe drink some water. He'd sweat a lot in that cabin and even though his house was much cooler, his throat was still parched. He wasn't expecting to find Mike and Nancy in the middle of a sibling dispute in his kitchen.

"—just saying, you should at least get *some* sleep tonight," Nancy was saying in a "reasonable, responsible adult" tone. "You've only managed to take a few quick naps since yesterday, and we've got school in like three hours—"

"Seriously?!" Mike interrupted from where he was standing on the opposite side of the table. "How can you be thinking about *school* at a time like this?!"

Jonathan, who certainly hadn't gotten his reputation as an aloof outcast by butting in on other people's arguments, figured it was best to let them have out whatever it was that was bothering them, rather

than trying to diffuse the situation. He and Will rarely ever argued, so this was something he didn't really know how to deal with. Instead, he walked around the table without a word, picked up a clean glass, and went to the fridge to get some cold water.

It was a decision he immediately regretted after seeing the dead demogorgon stuffed in there.

"Tap water it is, then," he muttered to himself as he closed the fridge door, moving to the sink to fill up his glass. Either he was still in shock, or it was a sign of how ridiculous his life was that a dead interdimensional creature stuffed in his family's refrigerator wasn't the craziest thing he'd seen that day.

Nancy was speaking as he took his first sip of the water. "Well, *someone* has to!" she retorted, pinning an authoritative glare on her little brother. It was kind of funny, Jonathan thought, that someone who so easily ignored or bent her parents' rules could dare claim the high moral ground in this situation, but that was where they'd ended up. And he knew Nancy only wanted some semblance of normalcy for her brother, anyway. "Mom might not care if we spend the entire weekend away from home, but you know if we miss school we'll both be in deep shit."

Jonathan contemplated her words. He probably wouldn't show up at school until he was sure Will was doing okay, and he didn't expect his mother to think anything of it. Will had always been a sickly kid and they'd never had enough money for sitters and the like, so Jonathan had stayed home with his brother several times over the years while their mom worked. This wouldn't be any different.

Steve probably shouldn't be going to school in his condition either, and from what little Jonathan knew of Steve's parents, he didn't expect them to care, even if they happened to be around. The rest of the kids, though, they would definitely be expected to show up at school (had any of them even bothered to call their parents to let them know where they were? Someone probably should've made sure they did). Knowing Karen Wheeler, Nancy and Mike were most definitely in the latter group. And he and Nancy had already skipped on Friday, so she probably had extra incentive to want to be there come Monday morning. But how could any of them be expected to go

to school and concentrate on their classes after everything that had happened that night?

"Well, *you* go to school, then, if you're so worried," Mike threw back, obviously thinking along the same lines Jonathan was. "I'll deal with Mom later. Right now I'm not moving from here until Hopper and Eleven come back. I don't care about anything else," he declared, final.

Jonathan found himself cringing. *Shit, is that what he's been waiting for this whole time?* He should've figured, really, but he'd been so busy worrying about Will that he hadn't really paid much attention to anything else going on around them.

Nancy sighed. "Mike—"

"They're at the cabin," Jonathan finally intervened, carefully.

The Wheelers turned to him in unison, as if noticing him for the first time, in a move so similar it was almost eerie. "What?" Nancy asked, like she couldn't quite process the words he'd just said.

"Hopper called earlier," he explained quickly. "On the radio. Asked if everyone here was okay, and when Mom told him we were, he said he'd take Eleven back to the cabin and that he'd stop by to check on us in the morning."

"Did they close the gate?" Nancy asked urgently. They hadn't seen or heard any movement from the Upside Down creatures since their return, so they'd mostly assumed that Hopper and Eleven had been successful in their mission, but they didn't have confirmation of that and it had left everyone on pins and needles for a long while.

"Is Eleven okay?!" Mike intervened, his words coming almost on top of his sister's question, nearly tripping over himself as he leaned his weight on the dining table, like that would somehow make Jonathan answer more quickly.

"Yeah, they closed it," he answered Nancy first, then turned to Mike. "And Hopper said she's okay, just exhausted. That's why he was taking her back to the cabin, so she could rest without—"

Mike obviously didn't care for the rest of that sentence, as he rounded on Nancy in what felt like a split second. "You have to take me there," he demanded immediately, a determination in his eyes that Jonathan had seen many times over the years, and that told him the boy wasn't going to back down easily.

Nancy rolled her eyes. "What? Mike, it's like four in the freaking morning—"

"*I don't care*," Mike interrupted her before she could make any sort of argument. "I need to see El. I need to know that she's okay."

"Hopper said—" Nancy started again.

"Hopper hid her from us for *an entire year*," he cut her off again, fuming. "I don't give a *fuck* what he says. I need to see her with my own eyes, *tonight*." His hands on the table clenched into fists, gaze still fixed on his sister. "You want me to get some sleep and go to school today? Then take me to the cabin. *Please*," he was all but begging.

"We can't just leave Mrs. Byers here on her own to deal with these many people after all that happened," Nancy countered, less frustrated and more conciliatory. "And even if Jonathan lends me his car, I'm not sure I'm awake enough to drive in the dark like that—"

Mike finally seemed to reach the limit of his patience. "Nancy, I *swear*, if you don't take me to the cabin *right now*, I'll go out that door and *walk* there myself if I have to—"

Nancy set her jaw, glaring at her little brother in matching levels of stubbornness. "Mike, don't be ridiculous—"

"I can drive you," Jonathan offered, intervening before the argument could escalate. He knew Mike and Nancy argued a lot even in the best of circumstances— most siblings did— but the last thing they needed was for an already trying night to end on an unnecessary shouting match.

The two of them turned to him in unison again. "No, Jonathan, you don't have to," Nancy declined immediately, stepping closer to him,

her blue eyes large and abashed. "I'm sure you want to stay here with Will, I can't ask you to—"

"Hey," Jonathan said, taking the last couple of steps until he was standing directly in front of her, an arm holding her elbow softly. "It's okay. The quicker we go, the quicker we can get back here. And, anyway, you helped me and my family when we needed you," he reminded her shakily. He didn't know what he would've done if she hadn't been there for him, lending him her strength and keeping her head cool when he couldn't stand to see Will suffering anymore. "Please, let me at least do this for you." It really was the least she deserved. If he spent his entire life trying to pay back her support, he didn't think it would be enough.

She looked him straight in the eye, still not entirely convinced. "Are you sure?"

"Yeah, it's fine," he assured her with a shake of his head and a smile. "I'll just go and let Mom know that we're going, so she can check on Steve while we're there." At her light frown, he raised a hand to cradle her cheek delicately, and added, "She won't mind. It'll give her something to do, other than just think about..." Will being possessed. Bob's death. Monsters threatening the people she cared about. The Upside Down invading their world. Take your pick.

"Okay," she conceded in a whisper, still looking into his eyes, and he could see that she understood. And for the first time in this very long night, Jonathan was reminded of what transpired between them the day before, that he could kiss her now, that he was allowed, even right then. Her eyes were drawing him in, wanting that breath of air from her lips that he needed to steady himself, and he started leaning in slowly...

"Great. So that's settled," came Mike's voice from the side, and they both started, turning to look at Nancy's little brother like they'd both forgotten he was there. He was staring at them half confused and half grossed out, and Jonathan realized that he probably had no idea that the status of their relationship had changed, and he doubted Nancy felt like explaining at the moment.

Thankfully for them, he must've come to the conclusion that he

simply did not care enough to ask, so he just shook his head and started walking around the table. "Let's go, then," he urged them as he walked past them toward the door.

Jonathan and Nancy stepped apart sheepishly. "I'm gonna, um—" Nancy started, signaling in the direction Mike had disappeared to with an amused smile.

"Yeah, uh, I'll just—" Jonathan signaled in the opposite direction, letting her know without words that he'd take a second to tell his mother they were leaving. She must've understood, because she smiled at him again and went over to the door, grabbing the first jacket she got her hands on from the hanger by the door and taking it with her— probably for Mike, who, Jonathan had only just realized, had nothing but a thin hoodie to stave off the cold.

Jonathan quickly let his mother know they were going out but they'd be back soon, picked up his keys and went out to join the Wheelers by his car. The ride to the cabin was pretty much silent. At one point Jonathan thought Mike might've fallen asleep (mainly because that's what Will would do at this point, he guessed), but when he looked in his rearview mirror, he found instead that the boy was very much awake, one leg bouncing up and down impatiently. He was paying very close attention to everything around them as they made their way to the cabin; if Jonathan had to guess, he would say Mike was probably memorizing the route so he could visit later on his own.

As soon as Jonathan parked the car, Mike leaped out of the back seat, urging them to "hurry up, hurry up" because he didn't know where the cabin was, so they would have to lead the way. The second they caught sight of the structure, Mike took off running. Thankfully they didn't have to worry about the tripwire— one of them had managed to trip it earlier when they brought Will in, not that it did anything other than make a noise that didn't serve any purpose since the cabin was empty— so Mike made his way to the porch without any issues and quickly knocked on the wood of the doorframe.

"I think the door's open," Jonathan pointed out as he approached Mike, remembering that a large chunk of the door had been blown out when that... *thing*... flew out of Will's body and into the sky. He highly doubted Hopper had taken the time to repair the busted lock

already. He pushed the door lightly, feeling some resistance (there was probably something like a chair set down on the other side to keep it closed), but with a little effort it gave way. "Chief? It's us..."

When he finally got the door open most of the way, he was shocked to find Hopper pointing a semi-automatic rifle straight at him.

The shock didn't last more than a second, though, and Hopper was already lowering the weapon by that point. "Jesus," Jonathan heard the man mutter to himself, running a hand over his face. Then he turned to Jonathan (and Nancy, who was standing just behind him) with a glare. "Did you forget something here, or...?" he asked them brusquely, but Jonathan didn't take offense. Not like the man was known for his hospitality. And it *was* nearly four in the morning.

Mike pushed his way past Jonathan and into the cabin. "Where's El? Is she okay?" he asked frantically. He looked around the place, his eyes finally zeroing in on the closed door of the only bedroom in the cabin.

"She's fine," Hopper replied, rolling his eyes at the boy's eagerness. "She's just sleeping, so don't—" He cut himself off when he saw Mike make his way toward El's room. "Hey, hey," he barked out, but Mike didn't stop.

"I won't wake her up, I promise, I just want to see her," the boy said quickly as he opened the door and walked into El's room without waiting for a reply. Hopper looked for a second like he wanted to pull him back by the collar of his shirt, but he was too far away, so Hopper sighed, resigned, and let him go.

Jonathan and Nancy let themselves into the cabin as Hopper moved to lock the safety on the rifle and put it against the wall near the corner. Then he walked toward the side table and picked up a cup of something that looked like coffee, letting himself drop on the sofa before taking a sip.

Nancy moved to the now-open doorway to El's room, perhaps to supervise, or perhaps to eavesdrop on her little brother; Jonathan wasn't sure which. He contemplated just sitting down on the couch by Hopper to wait, but given the way the man was glaring at his

coffee cup like he'd rather it be a bottle of beer, Jonathan thought going to Nancy was the better bet.

"Hey," he said as he walked up to her, noticing the wistful way she was looking at the kids. "You okay?" he asked, wondering if she was just tired or if there was really something weighing on her mind at the moment. She was leaning her head against the doorframe like she was contemplating something.

Now that he could see into the room, he saw that Mike sat on a chair by El's bed (if Jonathan had to guess, he'd say from the coffee that Hopper had been sitting there before, meaning to keep vigil over the little girl for the night). He had pulled the chair as close as he could get to the side of her bed and was leaning forward, holding one of El's hands in both of his, talking quietly to her with a concerned expression on his face. They couldn't really hear what he was saying from that distance, but it didn't matter much as the girl was, indeed, deeply asleep, and probably wasn't aware of Mike's presence nearby.

She turned to him and, straightening up, gave him a smile. "Yes, it's just..." She shook her head lightly. "This whole thing, it's..." She gestured vaguely in the direction of his brother and Eleven. "...Weird. I don't know."

"Weird, how?" he asked, putting his hands in his pockets. Of course it was weird. This entire day had been weird, so she would have to be a bit more specific if she wanted him to understand. As far as he could tell, Mike wanting to see Eleven was probably the least weird thing about it all.

"I don't..." she started, then seemed to change her mind. "I just..." She paused again. "I guess there's... there's something about the way Mike acts where Eleven is concerned that just... it gets to me, for some reason," she admitted, sounding somewhere between amazed and confused.

Jonathan shrugged, not really following. "Well, he likes her."

"Honestly? I think he more than likes her. Which is kind of crazy," she qualified in a stunned tone. "And that's the thing, I guess. It's just..." She shook her head. "I've spent most of my life arguing with

Mike in one way or another. It's just what we do. Even when we start to get along better, there's arguing. I've made peace with the fact that that's just the way we are, and it's always going to be like that," she said with a dismissive wave of her hands.

"But that means," she continued, "that I know more than just about anyone in the world how prickly he can be. And *boy*, is he. Even around his friends, it's like it only takes a blink for him to go on the defensive. And that's fine— it's just the way he is," she added, like she wanted to make sure he knew she wasn't bagging on her little brother. He knew. He'd heard her complain about Mike countless times through their acquaintance, but Jonathan could always hear an undercurrent of warmth to her words. They may be at odds half the time, but he knew Nancy and Mike loved each other just as much as he and Will did. They just... happened to express that love in a different way.

"But when he's around Eleven," she expanded on her initial thought, "or even when he's just talking about Eleven, really, since they haven't really spent *that* much time together, which is just *bizarre* when you think about it..." She paused for a second, as if remembering some old conversation Jonathan hadn't been around for. "It's like there's... a softness to him, somehow. A gentleness.

"I'd never really seen him like that before," she admitted, a little remorseful, like she thought she should've been paying more attention. Jonathan was familiar with that feeling. "He can get like that with Holly, sometimes, or even Will. But when it comes to Eleven, it's so... stark. So obvious, so... *there*. And it's just... it's weird to see, you know? Unexpected."

Now, Jonathan hadn't been privy to much of Mike and Eleven's interaction, and he'd never really talked about Eleven with Mike (he'd never really talked that much with Mike, to be honest, other than small talk whenever he was hanging out with Will), but he'd been there for their reunion earlier that night, much like the rest of the group was, and he had to admit there was something remarkable about the way they interacted with each other, like the entire world around them had disappeared— like it was just the two of them in that room, instead of there being eight other people watching them, slackjawed.

For those on the outside looking in, it had been an intensely awkward experience to witness that— nobody knew quite how to react, so they all just stood there and stared, for the most part. And if it was awkward for *him*, he could only imagine how strange it had been for Nancy to see her little brother like that. If that's what she was talking about, then Jonathan thought he understood.

She turned back toward El's room and crossed her arms, leaning against the doorway again. Jonathan dutifully moved close to her, loosely wrapping an arm around her waist as she kept watch over the two kids. Eleven had woken up at some point while they were looking away, it seemed. She was still lying down and looked sleepy, but she was turned on her side now, having inched just a little closer to the side of the bed where Mike was. The boy had pushed the chair away and was now kneeling on the floor beside her bed, still holding her hands, face just a few inches away from hers. Just like before, he appeared to be doing most of the talking in their little conversation, but Eleven nodded or shook her head every once in a while in response to something he said, even muttered a word here or there if she could.

"Sometimes I almost envy him, you know," came another unexpected confession from Nancy. Jonathan wondered if maybe this was her way to deal with the adrenaline of the day— while most people simply crashed from exhaustion, Nancy felt the need to relieve herself of everything she had been holding inside for far too long.

But hey, if she needed this, he'd be there to listen. "This thing with Eleven, you mean?"

"Well, kinda, but not really," was her response. It wasn't much of an answer, so he waited for her to clarify. "It's mostly just Mike, I guess. It just... he always seems to know exactly what he wants," she said, a tone of wonder in her voice. "He always seems to know what the right thing to do is, for him at least. And he's *thirteen*." She looks over her shoulder at Jonathan with undisguised awe in her expression.

"I think I know what you mean," Jonathan admitted from his side, with a small chuckle. These kids seemed to know exactly who they were, and for the most part they were unapologetic about it. Thinking back to the way they figured everything out earlier that

day, how to get the information they needed out of Will, how the monster worked, what they needed to do to give Eleven the best chance of success... even the most seasoned adult in the room could barely get a word in edgewise.

And they were *right*. About *everything*.

And it wasn't just that day, either— even when Will was with them, despite how shy and sensitive his little brother was, how insecure he could be sometimes, when he was with his friends, it was like a boost of confidence for him. Those kids were smart and self-aware and loyal and brave in a way that was almost intimidating, honestly. Even if they were a bunch of rejects. Or perhaps *because* that's what they were.

"I just wish I could be more like him that way, I guess," Nancy continued her train of thought. "These decisions just come instinctually to him, it seems like. And he never seems to regret anything." Jonathan was sure that was impossible— even someone as steadfast as Mike had to have *some* regrets. He just didn't let them hold him back. "Meanwhile, I feel like I second-guess every decision I ever make, and it's... exhausting," she finished with a sigh.

There was something about the way she said that that alarmed Jonathan a little. Perhaps it was because their relationship— did it even count as an actual relationship at this point?— was so new, and he didn't quite know how to handle it yet. They'd already been through so many ups and downs and misunderstandings that he was still afraid to say or do the wrong thing and cause her to regret everything... and hearing her bring up regrets and doubts of her own volition set him a little on edge. "Uh, you don't mean you're second-guessing... you know, this. Us. Are you?"

"What?" she turned around fully to look at him, and she must've seen the nervousness on his expression because her eyes widened. "Oh, no, no. I didn't mean that about, you know, yesterday. No, I think yesterday was..." She smiled and looked down, a little flustered. "It was probably the first time in a long time that I just... stopped thinking and just went with my heart." She grabbed both his hands in hers. "And I don't regret anything."

"...Except hurting Steve," Jonathan returned, because he'd seen them talking at his house earlier, and he'd seen that guilt-ridden expression on Nancy's face that was so familiar after the year they'd had. He couldn't blame her for any of it, really; despite their differences, he knew Steve was a good guy, and he felt bad that he got hurt in the process, too.

To her credit, she didn't bother denying it. "Except hurting Steve," she nodded with a slight cringe. Then it became a full-on cringe. "...And the vodka," she admitted sheepishly. "I really don't like vodka."

"Next time we'll have to try rum, then," he quipped with a chuckle.

"...Or maybe try it sober?" Nancy threw back, but it was all in good sport. She was laughing. As the mirth died down, she lifted her hands up to his neck. "And I could never regret us. That *was* the right thing to do. I can feel it."

"Yeah," he smiled back at her, feeling for the first time since the craziness of the day died down that this was something he could have. That he, Jonathan Byers, could finally have his feelings returned by the girl he'd been in love with for... ever, it felt like, without anything else— or themselves— getting in the way.

Well, one person could get in the way, at least as long as they were at his place. "Oy," Hopper called out from the sofa without even really looking at them, and Jonathan immediately pulled back from the way he'd been leaning down to kiss her. Nancy looked at him with wide eyes and Jonathan realized, *shit*, they'd been talking about *booze* in front of the Chief of Police. Had he heard?

If he *had* heard, Hopper sure didn't say anything about it, though. "Don't you two start making out in front of me now," was what he called them out on instead, and Jonathan didn't know if that was much better. Nancy was blushing. "I get the feeling I'm going to get enough of that from *those* two soon enough," Hopper pointed in the direction of El's room, where the two kids were still focused solely on each other. Like they were the only two people in the world.

Maybe Nancy did have a point about how deep the bond between those two went.

The sudden splash of embarrassment must've reminded Nancy that they needed to go back to Jonathan's house— preferably as soon as possible— because she quickly snuck a peek at her watch. "Actually, we should get going," she said, more for Hopper's benefit, Jonathan guessed, although she wasn't really looking at him. She turned to look inside Eleven's room again. "Mike, it's four fifteen. We gotta go."

The boy started, and looked for a second like he was going to object, but then he looked at Eleven on the bed— she seemed to have fallen back to sleep, although she was still clinging to Mike's hands— and sighed. "Okay," he muttered, resigned.

He let go of Eleven's hands and stood up from his prone position, cringing a little as he did so (that couldn't have been comfortable, Jonathan figured). He stood by her bedside, looking down at her, and then, after a moment of hesitation, leaned down and kissed the girl's forehead gently.

"I'll see you soon," he told her when he pulled back, even though she probably couldn't hear him. To Jonathan's ears, it sounded like more than just simple parting words— it sounded like a promise.

Jonathan looked at Nancy out of the corner of his eye and saw her smiling at her brother's gesture. He threw an arm around her shoulders and drew her to him. It was sweet, really. Not that it made him any less anxious about the moment when Will eventually came to him for relationship advice, of course. Hopefully many years down the road. But that was bound to be awkward, no matter what.

Maybe Nancy could help him out then.

The ride back to Jonathan's house was about as quiet as the ride in the opposite direction had been, except when he looked in his rearview he saw a different Mike; instead of twitching impatiently and memorizing the landscape, the boy was leaning his weight against the door, teetering on the edge of sleep. It seemed that now that he had seen Eleven, he finally felt relaxed enough to let himself go. Nancy also looked tired, just as Jonathan *felt* tired, as well, and he knew they were all relieved that the craziness was over— at least for the night— and they could now rest.

Well, at least for a couple of hours. The calm would hold for a couple of hours.

"Hey, Nancy?" came Mike's drowsy voice from the back a minute or so after they turned on Denfield.

"Yeah?" she replied from the passenger seat, almost absentmindedly.

Mike did not respond right away, and Jonathan wondered if he'd just fallen asleep halfway through a sentence. But then he spoke again. "...Thanks for doing this," he said, his voice thick with fatigue, but sincere.

Nancy turned her head to look at Jonathan with a bit of a grimace, and he knew she was silently apologizing for Mike not including him in that statement. It didn't bother Jonathan; the kid was probably too tired to be able to think that far, and he hadn't done much other than drive, anyway. Nancy was Mike's older sister and technically the grown-up charged with his well-being when it came down to it; if she had ultimately shot down Mike's pleas, Jonathan wouldn't have dreamed of intervening. In a way it was like he was bundled up in there with her, and he liked it that way, so he let her know with a shake of his head that he wasn't offended or anything.

She turned her head to look at her little brother over her shoulder. "No problem," she replied. Then her lips drew into an impish smile, and she gave Jonathan a mischievous glance before adding, "As long as I get to be the Maid of Honor at your wedding." Jonathan chuckled.

He expected Mike to snap back swiftly, as he often did when someone teased him— Nancy was right on that, he did get defensive very easily— but instead, the boy's head lulled to the side like he couldn't hold it upright anymore, and ended up resting against the window. His eyes closed. "...Yeah, whatever," he mumbled vaguely, and just a few seconds later his breathing evened out. He was asleep.

Seeing that her teasing had gone unheeded, Nancy turned back toward the front, at ease. Jonathan knew she'd been worried about her little brother, and it had to be a relief to see him rest peacefully, just as it had been a relief for him when he laid Will down on their

mother's bed earlier, finally back home and away from danger.

She laid her hand on his atop the gear selector and smiled at him. He smiled back, and they drove back to his house in the silence of the early morning hours.

.

Notes: Sooooo... sometimes these "moments" between Mike and Eleven are so quiet that... you can't actually, um, y'know... hear what they're saying? -Sheepishly looks from side to side, then leans in and whispers- Hey, it's not cheating if you're the one making the rules. ;)

This turned out a bit more Jonathan/Nancy-focused than I set out for it to be, but I've never written Jonathan/Nancy before, so I'll take it! The real reason why this fic came to be, though, is that it hit me during my (fourth or fifth) rewatch that that night, the night of the season 2 climax (which I'm assuming was a Sunday because the last mention of school was at least a day and a half before that; I counted), is really, *really* freaking long. I'm serious. Chronologically, it takes up part of episode 6, and the entirety of episodes 8 and 9. So much stuff happened that night. It's crazy. I *had* to push it a little further.

Not many notes on this, really, other than Jonathan's car is a '70 or '71 Ford LTD and I checked to make sure it came in automatic, lol. (It did). The title comes from Gwen Stefani's song of the same name, which really has nothing to do with this story other than it was stuck in my head as I wrote it. As I said in my note at the beginning, I don't necessarily think this is how it went in canon— I think Hopper would definitely have come back to the Byers'— but even so, I hope you liked my take on the aftermath. Thanks for reading!